

Message Text

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ORIGIN OES-07

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TO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TOCY, CA

SUBJECT:R/VS OCEANOGRAPHER AND DISCOVERER CLEARANCE
REQUEST, MARCH - DECEMBER 1978

1. THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA) IS PLANNING A RESEARCH PROJECT IN THE STRAIT OF JUAN DE FUCA, WHICH WILL EXTEND THROUGH 1978. THE PROJECT IS ENTITLED, PUGET SOUND ENERGY RESEARCH PROJECT (PSERP), WHICH IS A COOPERATIVE PROJECT WITH THE CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF OCEAN SCIENCES. IT IS A FIVE-YEAR STUDY FUNDED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, WHICH ADDRESSES THE POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE INTENSIFIED PETROLEUM ACTIVITIES ANTICIPATED FOR NORTHERN PUGET SOUND AND THE STRAIT OF JUAN DE FUCA. THE PROJECT IS MANAGED BY THE PUGET SOUND MARINE ECOSYSTEM

ANALYSIS (MESA) PROJECT OF NOAA AND BEGAN IN 1975 FOLLOW-
ING EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH GOC. THIS EFFORT IS BUT
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ONE PART OF OUR JOINT ATTEMPT TO STUDY AND CONTROL ANY
POSSIBLE OIL POLLUTION, REGARDLESS OF SOURCE, IN THE
JUAN DE FUCA AREA.

2. PROJECT RESEARCH HAS FOUR MAJOR OBJECTIVES:

(1) CHARACTERIZE THE MAJOR MARINE BIOLOGICAL POPULATIONS

SUBJECT TO IMPACT BY POLLUTION RESULTING FROM PETROLEUM TRANSPORTATION AND REFINING.

(2) DETERMINE THE EXISTING DISTRIBUTION AND CONCENTRATION OF POLLUTANTS WITHIN THE ECOSYSTEM WHICH ARE ASSOCIATED WITH REFINERY EFFLUENT AND PETROLEUM.

(3) CHARACTERIZE THE PRINCIPAL PROCESS AND MAJOR PATHWAYS BY WHICH PETROLEUM MOVES THROUGH THE MARINE ECOSYSTEM.

(4) PROVIDE DECISION MAKERS WITH ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION AND PREDICTIONS OF THE EFFECTS OF OIL-RELATED ACTIVITIES UPON THE ECOSYSTEM.

3. NOAA R/Vs OCEANOGRAPHER AND DISCOVERER WILL DEPLOY SURFACE AND SUBSURFACE CURRENT METER MOORINGS AND OCCUPY A GRID OF CTD STATIONS. A TYPICAL SURFACE MOORING WILL CONTAIN THREE CURRENT METERS AT 4M, 10M, AND 20M DEPTHS. A SUBSURFACE MOORING WILL CONTAIN THREE TO SIX CURRENT METERS, AN ACOUSTIC RELEASE AND A 3,000 POUND CONCRETE ANCHOR. THE DEPTH OF THE SUBSURFACE BUOY IS GENERALLY ABOUT 20M.

4. THE PROJECT REQUIRES 4-8 OPERATING DAYS AT THREE MONTH INTERVALS. THE FIRST PHASE WOULD BEGIN IN LATE
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MARCH OR EARLY APRIL WITH OPERATIONS TO BE CONDUCTED, AT INTERVALS, THROUGH 1978. EXACT DATES AND LOCATIONS WILL BE PROVIDED PRIOR TO EACH PHASE. A GENERAL STATION LOCATION CHART IS BEING PROVIDED. IT IS NOT EXPECTED THAT THE VESSELS WILL CALL AT CANADIAN PORTS.

5. DR. HOWARD HARRIS IS THE PRINCIPAL SCIENTIST AT THE MESA PROJECT CENTER IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON. ALL DATA WILL BE SHARED WITH THE GOC AND FOUR BERTHS ARE AVAILABLE FOR GOC PARTICIPATION.

6. OCEANOGRAPHER IS CAPTAINED BY GEORGE M. POOR WITH A CREW OF 75 AND SCIENTIFIC PARTY OF 6. RADIO CALL SIGN IS WTEP. DISCOVERER'S CAPTAIN IS SIDNEY C. MILLER WITH A CREW OF 75 AND SCIENTIFIC PARTY OF 6. RADIO CALL SIGN IS WTEA. BOTH SHIPS MONITOR 2182 KHZ AND 500 KHZ CONTINUOUSLY AS WELL AS CHANNELS 13 VHF AND 16 VHF. SHIPS' CHARACTERISTICS ARE: GROSS TONNAGE 3959, LENGTH 303 FT, DRAFT 19 FT. VESSELS WILL COMPLY WITH ALL RELEVANT MARINE REGULATIONS, INCLUDING, TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT COMPATIBLE WITH RESEARCH OBJECTIVES, THE VOLUNTARY VESSEL TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEME.

7. ACTION: EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO SEEK APPROVAL FOR THE PROJECT, AS DESCRIBED, FOR THE PERIOD MARCH - DECEMBER 1978. RESEARCH WILL BE CONDUCTED IN CANADIAN WATERS BY THE R/V'S DISCOVERER AND OCEANOGRAPHER. CHRISTOPHER

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